

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 /051 W

-----200218Z 099327 /66

R 191428Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1375

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

USINTO BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USIA WASHDC

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR

C O F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 0396

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, SY

SUBJECT: CHANGE IN SOCIALIST UNIONSIT PARTY LEADERSHIP

REF: DAMASCUS 364

1. SUMMARY: MINISCULE SOCIALIST UNIONSIT PARTY, MEMBER OF PROGRESSIVE NATIONAL FRONT (PNF), RECENTLY SELECTED NEW SECGEN. PARTY HAS PUBLICLY PRAISED SYRO-EGYPTIAN RAPPROACHE- MENT. AL-BATTH EDITORIAL CRITICIZING SU MINISTER OF HOUSING REPORTEDLY INTENDED AS INDIRECT ATTACK ON FONMIN KHADDAM. END SUMMARY.

2. MINISCULE SOCIALST UNIONSIT PARTY, COMPOSED OF EX-BAATHISTS WHO BROKE AWAY FROM BAATH PARTY IN EARLY 1960'S AND REJOINED FORMER COMRADES WITHIN FRAMEWORK OF PNF, HAS RECENTLY RECEIVED SPATE OF PUBLICITY IN SYRIAN MEDIA. JAN. 2 MEDIA

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REPORTED SU STATEMENT PRAISING SYRO-EGYPTINA UNIFIED COMMAND. JAN. 4 MEDIA REPORTED CABLE TO PRES. ASAD FROM SU SECGEN AHMAD AL-ASAAD SUPPORTING RAPPORACHEMENT WITH CAIRO.

3. LATTER CABLE, ACCORDING TO LOCAL COLUMNIST, IN EFFECT ANNOUNCED CHANGE IN COMMAND OF SU LEADERSHIP. ASAAD HAD REPLACED FAYIZ ISMAIL, AND PUBLICITY ACCORDED HIS

CALBE TO PRES. ASAD CONSTITUTED OFFICIAL ACCEPTANCE OF NEW SECGEN. SOURCE STATED THAT CHANGE PRESUMABLY REFLECTED PERSONALITY DIFFERENCES WITHIN SU, SINCE ITS SIZE HAD DIMINISHED TO APPROXIMATELY FORTY-FIFTY MEMBERS. NO BIO INFO YET AVAILABLE.

4. OF MORE SIGNIFICANCE, IN SOURCE'S VIEW, WAS SHARP CRITICISM OF SU MINISTER OF HOUSING MUHARRAM TAYYARA CONTIANED IN JAN. 7 AL-BAATH EDITORIAL UNDER SIGNATURE OF SENIOR EDITOR AMID KHULI (DAMASCUS 151). KHULI CONDENMED TAYYARA FOR ENGLIGENCE IN PERMITTING BANIANS RIVER CONTAMINATION TO PROCEED UNCHECKED, THEREBY CAUSING OUTBREAK OF TYPHOID AND DIARRHEA CASES. KHULI CONCLUDED WITH REMINDER THAT HIS PAPER ISSUED BY BAATH PARTY NATIONAL COMMAND. SOURCE, WHO IS COLUMNIST AT AL-BAATH, TOLD EMBOFF THAT KHULI WAS INDREICLTY ATTACKING FONMIN KHADDAM, WHO IS CLOSELY RELATED TO TAYYARA. KHULI APPARENTLY BELIEVED HE COULD COUNT ON POLITICAL SUPPORT FROM HIS PATRON, RIF-AT AL-ASAD. UNFORTUNATELY, NOTED SOURCE, RIF'AT HAS BEEN UNDERGOING TROUBLES OF HIS OWN RECENTLY. SHORTLY AFTER EDITORIAL APPEARED, KHULI PHONED BY BAATH PARTY DEPSECGEN AL-AHMAR, WHO CURTLY ADVISED HIM HE HAD GONE TOO FAR.

5. COMMENT: SOCIALIST UNIONSIIT PARTY, WITH ITS LIMITED MEMBERSHIP, IN NO POSITION TO SERIOUSLY AFFECT REGIME'S POLICIES, BUT ITS VERY EXISTENCE SYMBOLIZES PRES. ASAD'S COMMITMENT TO BROADENING REGIME'S BASE BEYOND THE BAATH. OCCASIONALLY, AS KHULI-TAYYARA INCIDENT DEMONSTRATES, OUR EFFORTS TO FOLLOW SU POLITICKING PROVE REWARDING, IN THIS CONFIDENTIAL

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CASE REVEALING MORE EVIDENCE OF INTERNAL BAATHIST FACTIONAL STRAINS.  
MURPHY

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## Message Attributes

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**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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